

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 11, 13, 14, 18, 22, 30, 33 and 34, and add new claims 39-61, as shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application:

Claims 1 - 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (currently amended): A cassette having a hollow for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a frangible tear line.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of frangible tear lines.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, further comprising a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, further comprising agarose in said hollow.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 18 (currently amended): The cassette of claim 11, further comprising both agarose and a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 16, further comprising filter paper positioned in said hollow to retard egress of molten paraffin.

Claim 20 (previously presented): A method for preparing a tissue sample for analysis, comprising the steps of:

- (a) orienting the tissue sample in the cassette of claim 11;
- (b) embedding an oriented tissue sample in a porous embedding media; and
- (c) directly processing the embedded tissue sample with tissue processing reagents while maintaining the original orientation of the sample without a post-processing paraffin-embedding step.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method of claim 20, wherein the porous embedding media comprises agarose.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The method of claim 20, wherein the process embedded porous embedding media comprises a pre-formed foam.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method of claim 22, wherein the tissue sample is oriented in an opening or depression formed in said pre-formed foam.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method of claim 23, including the step of forming said opening or depression by cutting, drilling, punching or molding.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of claim 23, wherein the tissue sample is embedded flush with or below an outer surface of the pre-formed foam.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method of claim 23, wherein the pre-formed foam comprises a preformed block of phenolic foam.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method of claim 21, wherein said agarose has a melting point in the range of about 55 to 65°C.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of claim 20, further including the step of sectioning the embedded tissue sample following processing.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of claim 20, wherein said tissue processing reagents are selected from the group consisting essentially of aqueous formalin, water, xylene, alcohol and paraffin.

Claim 30 (currently amended): A hollow cassette for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a frangible tear line, the hollow being filled, at least in part, by a porous embedding medium.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 31, wherein said porous embedding medium comprises agarose and/or a pre-formed foam.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 30, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

Claim 33 (currently amended): The cassette of claim 30, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of frangible tear lines.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The cassette of claim 30, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 35 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 30, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 31, and further comprising filter paper positioned within the cassette to retard egress of molten paraffin.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 31, wherein the agarose has a melting point in the range of 55 to 65° C.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 31, wherein the foam comprises a phenolic foam.

Claim 39 (new): A cassette having a hollow for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a tear line, said cassette further comprising a pre-formed foam block and/or agarose in said hollow.

Claim 40 (new): The cassette of claim 39, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

Claim 41 (new): The cassette of claim 39, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of tear lines.

Claim 42 (new): The cassette of claim 39, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

Claim 43 (new): The cassette of claim 39, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 44 (new): The cassette of claim 39, further comprising both agarose and a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

Claim 45 (new): The cassette of claim 39, further comprising filter paper positioned in said hollow to retard egress of molten paraffin.

Claim 46 (new): A method for preparing a tissue sample for analysis, comprising the steps of:

- (a) orienting the tissue sample in the cassette of claim 39;
- (b) embedding an oriented tissue sample in a porous embedding media; and
- (c) directly processing the embedded tissue sample with tissue processing reagents while maintaining the original orientation of the sample without a post-processing paraffin-embedding step.

Claim 47 (new): The method of claim 46, wherein the tissue sample is oriented in an opening or depression formed in said pre-formed foam.

Claim 48 (new): The method of claim 46, including the step of forming said opening or depression by cutting, drilling, punching or molding.

Claim 49 (new): The method of claim 47, wherein the tissue sample is embedded flush with or below an outer surface of the pre-formed foam.

Claim 50 (new): The method of claim 47, wherein the pre-formed foam comprises a preformed block of phenolic foam.

Claim 51 (new): The method of claim 46, wherein said agarose has a melting point in the range of about 55 to 65°C.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 52 (new): The method of claim 46, further including the step of sectioning the embedded tissue sample following processing.

Claim 53 (new): The method of claim 46, wherein said tissue processing reagents are selected from the group consisting essentially of aqueous formalin, water, xylene, alcohol and paraffin.

Claim 54 (new): A hollow cassette for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a tear line, the hollow being filled, at least in part, by a porous embedding medium, which comprises agarose and/or a pre-formed foam.

Claim 55 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

Claim 56 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of tear lines.

Claim 57 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

Claim 58 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

Claim 59 (new): The cassette of claim 54, and further comprising filter paper positioned within the cassette to retard egress of molten paraffin.

Claim 60 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein the agarose has a melting point in the range of 55 to 65° C.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

Claim 61 (new): The cassette of claim 54, wherein the foam comprises a phenolic foam.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached replacement drawings include amendments to FIGS. 5-8. A marked copy of amended FIGS. 5-8 is also enclosed.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
130 W. CUSHING STREET
TUCSON, AZ 85701
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567